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MRS. LEONOWENS

BY

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MRS. LEONOWENS

A perfect woman nobly planned,
To warm, to comfort and command;
And yet a spirit too, and bright
With something of an angel light.—*Wordsworth.*

MANY readers of the UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE in Montreal and elsewhere were not unaware that with the death of the lady who passed away after an illness of some three years on the 19th of last January, a person of rare distinction had vanished from our eyes and an unusually rich and varied life had reached its final close. This writer of this notice had for some years enjoyed the honour and inspiration of a somewhat close acquaintance with her, which had the effect of impressing upon his mind, among other things and thoughts, the strong conviction that she was, on the whole, the best, bravest and wisest among the many good and wise women he has known. She represented the type which has made the Empire. Two of her grandsons are now at the front. She was indeed "a mother in Israel." Would that she were with us in these days of stress!

Mrs. Leonowens, whose maiden name was Anna Harriette Crawford, was born at Carnarvon in Wales on November 5th, 1834, the daughter of an English gentleman, who died young, and a Welsh mother. The mother, on whom devolved the entire charge of forming her character, was quite uncommonly fitted to undertake that sacred responsibility. She was evidently what her little girl afterwards came in eminent measure to be, a women of force and stout heart. One incident in this mother's life sufficiently exhibits her quality. It was, one feels, precisely what little Anna, come to full stature, would have done under the same conditions.

Mrs. Crawford had married a second time, and accompanied her husband, an English officer, to India. He had

been appointed there, on one occasion, to survey a new road which was being built by the government in the dangerous neighbourhood of the Province of Guzerat, much infested in those days by Bhil robbers; and was travelling with a considerable amount of public money in his charge to pay the workmen with. His wife went with him. She had—just as Anna would have done!—acquired a good working knowledge of the Guzerati language, which made her useful in many ways and enabled her to render in the end a crowning piece of valiant and resourceful service,—one quite up to the standard of the Victoria Cross and only excluding the applicability of that because none but a woman could possibly have achieved it.

The party had retired for the night. It so happened that her husband, wearied with his day's work in the sun, was sleeping heavily in an adjoining room, while she lay on a cot close to the tumbril in which the treasure-box, with the government money in it, was wont to be conveyed from place to place. A small lamp stood in the midst between its two wheels, shedding a faint light. In the dead of the night she was roused by a shuffling noise, as of footsteps. Starting up she saw shadows moving along the screen made for them by the inner wall of the tent, which had two walls of canvas with a space between them; the solid darkness outside drawn close around it. She sat there staring, her heart nearly choking her. In a minute the shadows turned to squat shapes of dusky flesh entering one by one through the tent-door and only too plain in the glimmer of the lamp—six Bhils armed with bows and, as she well knew, poisoned arrows; the bodies naked, except for straw loin-coverings, and well-greased so as to give no hold. She was horribly afraid, but her head had never worked so clearly in her life. They had, of course, come to get the money, and they must not have it. She durst not cry for help. Her husband's appearance meant his instant death. She was the better watch-dog of the pair, because, as it flashed upon her, there was one thing the Bhils held inviolably sacred and would not profane unless in the very last extremity, and that was a woman's person. The blessed

and noble superstition of these cut-throats was her one weapon. She had the heart to make full use of it, and defy them. To the assurance of the leader (who after all was no German and like all honest savages a good bit of a gentleman) that they did not wish to hurt her but only to remove the contents of the cart, as they were much more in need of these than she was, she replied at once by throwing herself down in her long white night-dress, like a bar of white flame, in front of the treasure, exclaiming in Guzerati as good as their own: "You must trample on a woman's body to rob what has been entrusted to the care of her husband." She had shot her bolt. It nearly killed her. She lay there, more dead than alive, for half an hour, which seemed a year, not daring, even after all her senses had come back, to open her eyes. When at last she did open them, the robbers had gone, leaving the box untouched.

Like mother, like daughter! Many years after, that little daughter, then a young widow, was to have an astonishingly similar adventure. As she lay half-asleep in her room at Singapore, where she was living at that time, a well-oiled naked thug came sliding like a snake along the uncarpeted surface towards her bed. At first she was frozen with terror. Then she remembered that in the small jewel-box under her bed there were some letters that she prized very highly, her dead husband's. In an instant hot rage took the place of fear. A thousand devils could not snatch those letters from her! She jumped up in the darkness, seized an extinguished glass lamp which stood on a table by her couch, smashed it to pieces upon the bare wooden floor, and in a voice with a tone one has heard from her, much more trying to the thief's nerves than the sudden clatter and ring of broken glass, cried out: "I will be the death of you!" He rolled out—much more speedily than he had glided in. Anna had come out true to type.

Her mother being of the mettle indicated, was likely to show the capacity, as valuable as it is scarce in these soft days of ours, of cultivating in her daughter some power of will and

sense of what is meant by really doing a thing. She was indeed, a shade stern in the matter of discipline. Once the dainty ten year old poppet was thrown by her pony, and naturally came home with rather a deep feeling of the pathos of her situation. She was straightway sent to bed to have her cry out. If she could not keep her seat on a horse, she would surely be capable of keeping it there! A letter might have to be written no fewer than thirteen times, before it had come up to the exacting maternal standard in point of expression and calligraphy. At a very early age she was sent to boarding-school, where she remained till she was fifteen, her mother having in the meantime left England with her second husband for India. The next stage in her education was the exceedingly delighful one to her of travelling in Egypt under the tutelage of family friends, the Rev. Mr. Badger and his wife. Mr. Badger was guide and philosopher as well as friend. A very learned man in his way and a keen Egyptologist, he succeeded, no doubt very much to his satisfaction, in infecting his beautiful and intelligent young ward with his own enthusiasn for mummies. At that tender age she wrote a lecture on Egypt which she was able to deliver sixty years later with but little change, to the immense enlightenment and delight of a Montreal audience. It was then that she laid the foundation for that love of learning and taste for antiquity, and that priceless liberating capacity for sympathetic observation of the thoughts and customs and religions of far-away people whose ways and thoughts are very unlike ours which went a long way towards making her the full and free woman she grew up to be. In this peculiarly momentous and decisive line of her development, she was destined, as we shall see presently, to find much further scope and stimulus later on in India and Siam.

From Egypt she went to join her mother and step-father in India. With them she stayed at Poonah for a year or two. Then, rather decidedly against their wishes—they favoured a much wealthier, though older and less attractive, suitor—she married Captain L. S. Leonowens of the British Army.

The fair young couple, "strength and beauty met together," found an appropriate nest in a quaint house just out of Bombay which they called "The Aviary," the folly of a mad Englishman, built expressly with a view to its being shared with him by the birds. This pretty pair accepted the omen and fulfilled it. Later they were moved to Singapore. It was a singularly happy union. There was the tie of congenial tastes and studies to knit both hearts and heads; for these young people ran coupled in a high quest; they were both ardent in their zeal to learn the thought and languages of the East. Together they worked hard at Sanscrit, travelled hand-in-hand through many of the strange scenes and cities of that fascinating country; each heightening the other's zest, and catching the other's thought before it had been spoken. But alas! like most perfect things, this sweet and fruitful comradeship was brief. In spite of his young wife's overwhelming presentiments of impending evil and her entreaties that he should not go, Captain Leonowens set out with some friends of his on a tiger-shooting expedition, promising to return without fail on a certain day. He kept his tryst, true to his word. But, just by keeping it, he made her bodings come true; for, in his impatient eagerness to belie them, and return to Singapore on the promised day, he had disregarded the remonstrances of his friends, pushed on in the terrible moist heat, and when he reached home, punctually almost to the hour, it was only to die of sunstroke. His bride was left with very little money, and two children, a widow of twenty-five. She never married again though many sought her hand, many who would have been proud and well able to relieve her of her heavy burden, and though to the eyes of some, of whom this writer was one, she never ceased, even after she had been promoted to the proud dignities of a great-grandmother, to be one of the fairest sights in the flower-garden of English womanhood.

It was perhaps a blessing in disguise that a blow so crushing was, at the same time, an imperative call to action. At any rate the shock of this bereavement was certainly what

opened the door for Mrs. Leonowens upon the most exciting and far-radiating scenes in the whole drama of her life. She had to work to educate her two children, a girl of four years of age and a boy of two. After an unsuccessful attempt, by the aid of other resident officers' wives, to maintain a school at Singapore for English children, which did not pay, she accepted the offer of a post as English governess to the court of Siam, arriving at Bangkok with her boy on March 15th, 1862. The little girl had been sent to school in England.

His Majesty Somdetch P'hra Paramendr Mongkut,under whose august if somewhat blighting shadow she was doomed to the hard task of keeping her soul alive for seven strenuous years, first entered upon the scene for her in the vehicle of a very characteristic letter. It is worth giving in full, being one of the best examples, among other things, of that English style on which the monarch, not without reason, decidedly fancied himself. The punctuation, here and elsewhere when I quote him, is all his royal own.

" English Era 1862 26 February
Grand Royal Palace, Bangkok.

" To Mrs. Leonowens.

" Madam: We are in good pleasure and satisfaction in heart that you are in willingness to undertake the education of our beloved royal children. And we hope that in doing your education on us and on our children (whom English call inhabitants of benighted land) you will do your best endeavours for knowledge of English language science and literature and not for conversion to Christianity; as the followers of Buddha are mostly aware of the powerfulness of truth and virtue as well as the followers of Christ, and are desirous to have facility of English language and literature more than new religions."

That is to say, if one may dare to open it out in the language of Somdetch's inmost heart: "Bleat not overmuch white woolly ewe lamb! The royal elephant of Siam hath a much more capacious brain-pan than thy tiny curds-and-cream simplicity of convolutions could stretch to fill. Thou hast achieved a nice little new-laid egg of faith, chicken of the western spring, and found religion? Cackle not too

fervidly; thy Brahmapootra grandmother laid large ones and had discovered the art of suction of the same, long ages ere thy tender birth."

To guard against a too probable *naïveté* of proselytism and save much trouble beforehand, the shrewd old king, a profound Pali and Sanscrit scholar, who had been a Buddhist priest and had spent twenty years in the ascetic and studious retirement of a monastery (rather a formidable theological curriculum by our western standards!—from which, it is true, he had emerged most uncommonly sharp-set), thought it well to begin at the very start with a weighty and politely caustic delimitation of functions for the new English "Mees." These unsubstantial creatures could sometimes develop an amazing toughness and importunity in their little gossamer evangelical ineptitudes! Little did he dream what surprises awaited him! In this case he had no need to fear any superfluous importation of soft religious coal from English missionary mines into his oriental Newcastle. The new English governess was quite a new sort of governess and Englishwoman. She knew as well as he did that "the powerfulness of truth and virtue" was the soul of the Buddha's life and teachings, as well as of the Christ's, and of every other founder's of any high religion that ever lived. She had nothing but a very intelligent reverence for the *religion* professed by His Majesty. The very considerable trouble he came, as we shall see, to have with her, arose solely from His Majesty's *practice*, which offered a piquancy of contrast with the pure heights of his theoretical faith such as no Christian could have surpassed.

For unlike Gautama Buddha, who had exchanged a throne for a monk's cell, S. P. P. M. Mongkut had taken leave of the rigours of his monastery, where he had written an admirable treatise showing that his great master's sole aim had been the salvation of men from "the blindness of all selfish and carnal passions," to blossom out into a most astoundingly polygamous oriental despot, capricious, sensual, avaricious, inordinately greedy of power and praise. The

Buddhist philosopher-king, in his domesticities at least, proved to be much as other kings of Siam had been, and indeed, in their circumstances, could scarcely have escaped being. Even at the wintry age of sixty-three, he still retained the warmest and most versatile appreciation for any kind of charm, or even utility, in women: and could never see that sort of prize without an overpowering itch to annex it for his own exclusive deglutition. He was bitterly jealous of his younger brother, a much more shining and popular figure than himself, who held, under the peculiar institutions of the country, the splendid but impotent position of "second king;" and treated him both meanly and cruelly. No sooner had this brilliant young prince been removed from his path by a premature and lingering death (with which, however, Mongkut was never, I think, suspected of having had anything to do), than the venerable survivor, though he had been deeply and truly moved by his brother's untimely fate and had become completely reconciled to him in a very pathetic scene of parting before the end, outraged even the decencies of Siam by transferring that now sincerely lamented brother's beautiful and queenly widow to his own harem. Maha Mongkut was, I should think, by long odds, the most erudite monarch of his day; was, in fact, a sort of eastern James the Sixth, the most sapient fool in heathendom or Christendom. He was deeply versed in the wisdom of the Orient, and not unacquainted with western science. He had a good knowledge of Latin and English, picked up from his excellent friends the Protestant American missionaries (the Jesuits and all else that was French he feared and hated), besides being, as I have already indicated, an acknowledged authority on Sanscrit and Pali. His theological views (although he was once provoked roundly to declare: "I hate the Bible mostly") were liberal and clear to a degree very rare indeed among English bishops and non-conformist lights, or Roman priests. His public policy was remarkably enlightened, especially as regards hospitality to European trade and material civilization. Siam, under his guidance, inaugurated a new era for the East, taking the

lead, among its independent principalities, in that process of assimilating western improvements in the outward utilities of life which has lately made such strides in Japan and China, as well as in Siam. He was a very shrewd man, too, as we have already seen, and not without a very pretty wit of his own. He could, for instance, put down insolent presumption with a caustic word, where annihilation by main force, the method more natural to him, would have been too expensive a pleasure. Here is part of a letter from him to Monsieur Auberet, the fire-eating French Consul for Napoleon the Third in the days when the Gallic cock with comb still uncut used to crow so loud and shrill, especially in the lands of the rising sun, with which that crested bird felt in himself a born affinity. The obstreperous Gascon had broken off a diplomatic conversation with His Siamese Majesty's cousin, the Chief Judge of the Royal Court of Equity, by seizing that sacrosanct magnate by the hair, driving him from the room and throwing his betel-box after him. In the following grave words of picturesquely scathing calm he received, from a master of the science, his lesson in the comparative values and distances of persons and things:—

"Sir:—The verbal insult or bad words without any step moreover from lower or lowest person is considered very slight and inconsiderable." [One likes the beautiful generality of this!] "The person standing on the surface of the ground or floor Cannot" [delicious capital C!] "injure the heavenly bodies or any highly hanging Lamp or Globe"—that is "Cannot" injure the divine Mongkut himself or such lesser derivative luminaries as his Chief Judge—"by ejecting his spit from his mouth upwards it* will only injure his own face without attempting of Heavenly bodies." (Do you interpret the parable M. Auberet? If not, the next sentence will flash a light for you!) "The Siamese" (though called 'inhabitants of benighted land'—if not the French!) "do not endeavour to injure heavenly bodies with their spit from mouth....."

There was a great deal in old Maha's head! But in the seclusion of his harem, as Mrs. Leonowens,—who taught the sixty-seven royal children and such of the army of wives and

*The demonstrative "it" used as a relative—with much force and enviably royal superiority, reminding one of "Sigismundus Super Grammaticam," to Lindley Murray.

concubines as wished to learn English,—saw him, very much from the inside, this learned sage, enlightened ruler, and astute man of the world, this royal "Causeway Saint" as the Scotch would call him, was quite an extreme case of the "house deevil." He was there just what the vast majority of manhood would have been had they been stuck up on his dehumanizing pedestal, surrounded by squatting slaves whose idea of supreme bliss was that they might be used for the gratification of his most preposterous whim, a petulant and cruel despot, roused to murderous rage by the slightest rub against his grain, a spoilt baby with thunderbolts for a rattle and gum-comfort!—who bitterly resented the mockery of being called in the English geographies an "absolute King," because, in his own words, he could not (as he would have dearly loved to be able to do) "kill one of his enemies by pointing his stick at him." Had he only been charged with the high voltage thus pithily desiderated, there would have been much need for lightning-rods among the Jesuits and other French residents in Bangkok, and even Mrs. Leonowens herself would scarcely have escaped the fate of Semele.

For though, as we have seen, she did not exasperate this very wide-awake pagan with the lamentations of Exeter Hall and good Bishop Heber's hymn, or any other melodious baas of compassion for the "heathen in his blindness," she was indeed "one great difficulty" to him. She showed him that there were still more stringent limits to his power than the highly regrettable inefficacy of his bamboo-cane for death-dealing. His immensely varied experience of her sex had aroused the reasonable expectation that she as a woman would give little trouble. It was his fate, however, in this particular instance, to run against the shock of an entirely novel type.

He meant to get his money's worth out of her with a vengeance. She was not only to teach English to his wives and children; she was also to help him in his voluminous foreign correspondence, copy in a fair round hand "for his readily *perusal" the letters that came to him from abroad

*Adverb, because the noun "perusal" is verbal. Excellent Greek construction!

in sheaves by every mail, and especially to make clear to him the murky sentences and "gloomily deceiving terms" of the French communications, in which he scented a world of sinister meaning and stealthy aggression. To all this, pitiless as were his exactions in the detail of it, she made no objection. She even found time, in the midst of all, to pursue her Oriental studies and get even with her taskmaster by roping him in, much to the old royal pedant's delight! as her instructor. But such compliance would have availed her little towards establishing a tolerable position for herself, had she not shown him quite unmistakably that she was no mere tool in his hands, but, on the contrary, a very distinct and independent personality, encountering him infallibly, at certain well-marked points, with a will of her own, as much more sovereign as it was finer than his. The first conflict between them arose upon the question as to where she was to live. By the terms of the engagement she and her boy had his royal word for a house of their own in the neighbourhood of the palace. This, however, he chose to forget. It would be more economical, which told much with him, and at the same time more convenient, to have her within a minute's call within the walls. But she had made up her mind once for all not to hear of this highly eligible arrangement. The king was equally determined to have it his way. As early as the second time he vouchsafed her audience, he declared in his most majestic and definitive voice: "It is our pleasure that you shall reside in the palace with our family." That was to be the end of the whole affair. It was not so. "It would be quite impossible," she replied, for her to obey His Majesty's commands in this matter. The gates were locked every evening and she would feel like a prisoner. "Of course she would!" Mongkut thought. All Siam was, in relation to him, just a cage of prisoners. That was mere foolishness. But she stuck to it, and reminded him of his gracious promise. Now this was too much. No one had ever dared to pester him with such imbecilities in his life. "His own words of a month ago!" That was a month ago and this was to-day. A month ago he had imaged

cork-screw curls, tortoise shell spectacles, and the complete school-marm. His olive turned a purply-yellow with rage as he proceeded to give his own drastic version of the eternal "scrap-of-paper" doctrine—the doctrine of the tyrant encumbered by past pledges that do not fit his present mood and convenience. He might have been a Hohenzollern. "I do not know what I have promised. I do not know former condition. I do not know anything but you are our servant and it is our pleasure that you must live in this palace and *you shall obey!*" But she did not obey. She let him bellow to the imminent danger of bursting a blood-vessel in his lungs: "You shall live in palace; you shall live in palace"—turned her back upon him and walked out leading her boy by the hand, merely facing round once or twice and bowing her acknowledgement of the monarch's pursuing storm of objurgations. And after an incredibly shabby exhibition of simple cunning on his part—he assigned her a horrible little den impregnably barricaded by the stinks of a filthy slum—the obstinate old skinflint was compelled, by some three months of indomitably steadfast resistance from his delicate adversary, which however cost her a bad illness, to own himself beaten, and to find a decent house for her.

In that English woman's castle of her own, she lived with her boy for six eventful years, maintaining an inviolable sphere of royalty for herself which was just as absolute, if it was not so extensive, as that of the demigod her master. Much to his astonishment, that "Supreme Celestial" was forced to recognize in this uncomplaining and astonishingly helpful young woman a certain palpable divinity which on occasion confronted him like a highly electrified fence of thin-spun steel wire. Like his prime-minister Kralahome, the ablest man in his dominions, who was the first to divine her peculiar properties and discreetly to stand her friend, he too was erelong made to bow before her "great heart." This particular "lady of Niger" did not wreathe the Royal Tiger's face in smiles of beatifically prosperous assimilation, though she did "ride on the back of the Tiger," often deflecting him from

tigerish courses and guiding him into sundry deviations towards decency. She came to have great influence with him, so great that she was commonly, though of course quite erroneously, believed to be a member of the dreaded San Luang, the Midnight Court which held in its hand the lives and properties of all Siam. He conferred upon her a patent of nobility to which he munificently attached an estate in the recesses of some impenetrable jungle. He would have gladly raised her even to royal dignities, if she had been willing to accept a fraction of his conjugal condescensions. Of course she would none of him, either in whole or in part. She would have much preferred a nice little clean grave. Once he gave her a magnificent ring. She took it in perfectly good part, and entire singleness of eye. *Honi soit qui mal y pense.* But when he saw that her innocence had not caught the squint of its parable, he took care to have his ring back. Mongkut was a very thrifty potentate and but little versed in Platonics.

> Although on pleasure he was bent,
> He had a frugal mind.

Like the Athenians of Pericles he combined strict economy with the unerring taste of a real *connoisseur*.

Her life in that far country, as remote from the normal for her as if she had been whisked away to another planet, was rich in all kinds of fascination and stimulus. She had the eye for the picturesque city on the Meinam, the Venice of the East, built mostly on the water of the great river which is to Siam almost what the Nile is to Egypt; for its motley confusions of splendour and squalor, palaces and huts, ethereal temples and fetid dungeons, the blazing sunshine and black velvet shadows, the riot of luxuriant vegetation, the bizarre rites and customs, and all the manifold shapes and colours of that swarming and various life where man is either a splendid flower or else an abject weed upon the rubbish-heap. She made great progress too with her Eastern languages and literature and, as I have said already, drew liberally on the really profound stores of the king's learning in such matters.

Besides, she was, on the whole, very happy in her work of teaching, especially in the case of the Crown-Prince, the Chowfa Chulalonkorn, who died some years before her, but not until she had in rather a notable way seen the travail of her soul with him. It was he who, very much under her influence, among other reforms abolished slavery in Siam. All her pupils of the harem were devotedly attached to her, and grew to put almost unlimited faith in her beneficence and might. She became to these poor helpless creatures a kind of sanctuary from the incalculable caprices of their all-powerful lord, which might at any moment fall upon them in the shape of ruthless scourgings, imprisonment in a foul *oubliette*, or even death. She was born with a strong faculty for hatred of injustice and cruelty and all unreason, and with the very highest gift of woman implanted in her breast in a degree of vigour which is rare indeed, the dare-devil courage of protective motherliness. With all that too she was unexpectedly "canny," as the Scotch say, and sometimes showed a good deal of tact in managing the royal beast. For instance, she would break in upon one of his fits of fury by appealing to his omniscience on some point of Oriental grammar—a transparent device, which, however, never failed to bring uppermost in him for the moment the spectacled pedant and at least suspend the monstrous lash or chain of the tyrant underneath. Besides, the prime-minister, essentially a man of singular justice of mind, was apt to back her up, often with a happy appearance of fortuitousness. The result was that on many occasions she was enabled to stand between the dragon and his wrath, and figured in the imaginations of these simple souls (wiser than we to see authentic *avatars* and condescensions of the divine in their living helpers, instead of waiting till these have been dead for a comfortable spell of centuries before piling up temples over their bones and ashes!) as a kind of tutelary goddess under whose wings the oppressed could flee for refuge. This *woman* "was a shelter from the wind, a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

It was even believed, and indeed to some extent by the king himself, whose experience had left him but little faith in human disinterestedness, that she must have amassed great riches from the gratitude of her *protegées*. He did not see, for all his shrewdness, that the whole secret of her power lay precisely in the fact that all she did was done for love and not for money; that one single "tical" [1] for value received would have completely punctured it and deflated her.

But it was a terribly wearing life. Her own ordinary work would have been enough for three persons—her teaching and her charge of the king's foreign correspondence, complicated as was the latter task by his frequent changes of mind, taking back of moves, and cool demands that she should absolve him from any resulting awkwardness by pretending to have misunderstood his meaning before and restating it according to his present improved reinterpretation. Her rôle as a general court of appeal, and special providence for suppliants, in that atmosphere of crawling intrigue and rampant savagery, was a heavy addition to her burdens. Still worse was it to look on helpless at so much that she had no power to interfere in. On one occasion she was only saved by a timely swoon from seeing an entirely innocent young woman, who had aroused her keenest sympathies, burnt alive in front of her window.[2]

After the death of his younger brother and his scandalous annexation of the beautiful widow who was, however, saved from his clutches by the self-sacrifice of one of her women,[3] the King became flatly impossible. It was as though he had been possessed by a devil. Every day one or other of the women was scalded by the ebullitions of his deadly temper. The palace was full of sighs and groans and tears. Mrs. Leonowens did not escape the typhoon even in her own person. His Majesty had arranged with Sir John Bowring,

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[1]Siamese currency.

[2]As a lesson to her. She had pleaded for pardon.

[3]This heroine made successful arrangement for her royal mistress's escape; remained to take her place, and cut out her own tongue so that no information could be extorted from her.

an old friend of his, that the latter should assume the post of Siamese plenipotentiary at the court of France. He chose now to change his mind, preferring to be represented there by a native Siamese embassy. His secretary was coolly requested to appease Sir John. The new arrangement was to be attributed to the advice of the English Consul, or, if she liked, to her own; in short to anything she chose, that would serve to justify the impeccable Mongkut. Now this was too large an order. She had often before made a shift to get him out of similar scrapes, by harmless means, generally at the cost of an infinitude of pains to herself. But she would not lie for him. He was furious; emptied upon her head his whole really formidable alabaster box of highly-scented invective. Finding he could not make her budge an inch, he let her go away to her house; then drew up and sent her after a day or two an extraordinary list of charges. It included such damning items as the theft of a book from the royal library—the book was afterwards found under a pillow in one of his innumerable sleeping-rooms—disrespect to the sacred majesty of his person shown in sitting when he stood, pointing the finger at him,—I well believe this charge—and calling him a "bad man" and so forth. All this, he said, he would lay before the British Consul, if she did not obey him at once. The document was brought to her house by a native secretary accompanied by a crowd of weeping female slaves from the palace, who, in the name of their mistresses, all the wives of His Omnipotence the Ogre, besought her to yield and flee from the wrath to come. The secretary tried to bribe her too, and after two hours vainly spent in raising his bids went away swearing that she was insatiable, a mere daughter of the horse-leech, whose price soared out of sight beyond the fee-simple of a hundred modest Siamese salvations. But still worse was to come. The king in a fit of uncontrollable rage had roared: "Will none of my people rid me of this woman?" and one fine morning, when they appeared as usual before the palace gate, she and her boy found themselves facing an ugly mob of roughs and soldiers who drove them back and picked up

stones. It might have gone hard with them, even if they had escaped the fate of the proto-martyr, had not a crowd of the poorest slaves, both men and women, who at that hour were waiting for admission, formed a guard, opening their umbrellas to shield them from the missiles of the enemy, and so escorted them home. It was a great tribute indeed to the white lady, as well as an astonishing revelation of these poor folks' valiant loyalty. At this time Mrs. Leonowens was daily in very real peril and had to bar and double-lock her doors and windows. She had almost been reduced, at one moment, to taking refuge with the English Consul.

However, the storm blew over. The king could not do without her. He found once more that he had met his master, and gave in with a curiously plaintive recognition at once of her indispensable value and of her demonic inflexibility. "M'am," he said when she was once more installed at her desk, "you are one great difficulty. I have much pleasure and favour on you, but you are too obstinate. You are not wise. Wherefore are you so difficult? You are only a woman. It is very bad you can be so strong-headed. Will you now have any objection to write Sir John and tell him I am his very good friend?" She had no objection whatever to say that much, but said no more. He read her letter, grunted, and went out and kicked the slave his foster-brother. He was in his best humour all the rest of that day.

So the episode ended. But the long strain had been too much even for her. Her health broke down and she came far indeed within the shadow of the gates of death. It was only her indomitable will and her inveterate habit of thwarting Mongkut that saved her. With the kindly thought of making her passage easy for her, he sent a message, delivered when she was just barely conscious, to say that she need in no case be anxious about her little boy, for he would bring him up himself. No oxygen pumped into her could have knocked at the door of her vital forces, then fast sinking into the long sleep, with half so wakeful a summons as this well meant sponge of vinegar and hyssop. Rather than commit her boy

to the king, whatever it cost her, she would live! She pulled herself together with a desperate rally, and did live. But she failed to thrive. She was still quite unequal to the severe demands of her life in Siam. The king was very loath to let her go, but at last, after a year's querulous kicking against the pricks, and naggings on his part about "ingratitude and idleness," he was at length reluctantly compelled to give her six months' leave of absence.

So she quitted that dark place where she had been a steady light to many. It was with sore hearts that the women and children of the place beheld their stout-hearted and compassionate champion leave them. Fortunately she had already seen them through their worst troubles. Not very long after her departure, the summons kings and clowns must answer came to their hard master and hers, to set out on his own far and final journey. He carried away with him for ever much of the evil system which had wrought the misery of those poor things. Under the mild reign of his successor, the gentle intelligent prince, her own apt scholar, good days were in store for them. The spirit implanted in this receptive heart by his "English governess" bore fruit in all sorts of blessed changes for Siam. Her six years' labour had not been, like David's dear-bought draught from the well of Bethlehem, as water spilt upon the ground. She had, without knowing it, made a great and enduring contribution to the regeneration of that sick land, by permanently impressing something of her own character and ideals upon the nobly plastic mind of the creator of modern Siam, Somdetch Maha Chulalonkorn. He never forgot her, or ceased to show with what reverence and gratitude he cherished her memory. A great part of Mrs. Leonowens still lives in the country where she "went forth in tears bearing precious seed," and loved and suffered much.

The gratitude and affection of her clients showed up in many touching ways as they took farewell of her. Those who could brought her small sums of money for her journey; and even the poorest slaves embarrassed her with their pathetically

impracticable offerings, cocoa-nuts, sugar, rice-cakes, and beans. The young prince took both her hands, laid his brow on them, and said: "M'am dear, come back p ease." The king himself showed his very best side, which was very good indeed, and took his leave of her in really monumental words: "M'am, you much beloved by our common people and all inhabitants of palace and royal children. Everyone is in affliction of your departure and even that opium-eating secretary P'hra Alack [the King's foster-brother whom he used to throttle for the relief of his feelings when their immediate object was sour grapes] is very low down in his heart because you *will* go. *It shall be because you must be a good and true lady.* [Yes, Your Majesty! It shall indeed be so.] I am angry and often lose my temper though I have large respect for you. *But nevertheless you ought to know you are difficult woman, and more difficult then generality.* But you will forget and come back to my service, for I have more confidence on you every day. Good-bye." It was the last he saw of his "one great difficulty."

With all his faults there was much of the right stuff in Mongkut, and his fair pupil in Sanscrit and Pali owed him more than his willing services as her Pundit in these tongues; more by a good deal than she ever quite acknowledged or was aware of. She had given much, but she had also received much, in Siam. The seven years' wrestle with that dusky angel by the river Meinam had been the making of her. The good are apt to be guilty of a certain ingratitude to the wicked. For one thing, who provides them with the flinty stuff of indispensable resistance on which their virtue has struck its light? And poor Mongkut, like other tough subjects, was, after all, far from being mere flint. He could vibrate quite harmoniously on the whole, at times, if with some still unresolved scrapes of lingering petulance and self-assertion, to the qualities which the friction of his own perversities had chafed into music. He had, at least, a singularly clear head, a most rare and precious possession, and one scarcely, I think, compatible with an utterly hardened heart.

The seven years in Siam had broken Mrs. Leonowens' health and had left her as far as ever from her main object in going there, which was, as we saw, to obtain the means of educating her children. She had, however, amassed much raw material of knowledge and experience, convertible into the necessary coin by the diligent exercise of her quite marked literary talent. So, on her return to England, she wrote her first book: "An English Governess at the Court of Siam." In order at once to establish her health and make the most of this exceedingly interesting and well-written work, vividly reflecting as it did for English-speaking readers the many-coloured charm of the far East, and opening up a glimpse into the intimacies of life there, such as was entirely new to western literature, she was very wisely advised to go to the United States. The book was likely to sell quite extensively in America, and the only way to wrest a reasonable share in the profits for the authoress from the grabbing of the pirate-publishers then infesting that country, was to be on the spot. So it was that she came to make her home on this continent, at Staten Island to begin with. Here she spent many productive and happy years, in writing—it was at Staten Island she composed her "Romance of the Harem," her most popular and thrilling effort—teaching, and lecturing, and in the society of many stimulating and significant people. Those were the great days of American literature and Boston culture, ere Mary Baker Eddy and Billy Sunday were dreamt of, days which seem already so far away and, alas! at present, so little likely to return. It was a happy moment in the life of that wonderful nation, remarkable for many things as this moment but surely not least remarkable for the astounding disparity between their enormous wealth and numbers—one hundred millions of well-fed white people—and the scraggy exiguousness of their spiritual output. Mrs. Leonowens had the good fortune to catch them before the invasion of their lean years, and enjoyed the acquaintance of a brilliant company of kindred spirits, such as she would have sought in vain to-day—Mr. and Mrs. Fields, R. D. Owen, R. W. Gilder, St. Gaudens, Madame

Botha, Mary Mapes Dodge, S. Maria Child, Sarah Orne Jewitt, Professor Chandler of Columbia University, and the stars of first (American) magnitude, Lowell, Emerson and Oliver Wendell Holmes. Her oldest and staunchest friends of all were Francis D. Cobb (whom she had known in Singapore and who had introduced her there to the writings of Emerson) and his wife to whom she dedicated the "English Governess." With that true kindness of heart, and unsurpassed genius for friendship, which did then, and still does, mark out Americans among all the families of mankind, and constitutes their specific title to distinction, the Cobbs did everything that could possibly be done to help her over her first hard days in a land of strangers.

In 1879 her daughter was married to Mr. Thomas Fyshe, whom they had met in Staten Island, a Scot of great ability, rugged force of character, and genuine public spirit; very highly esteemed by Mrs. Leonowens, and destined thenceforward to exert a dominating influence upon her fortunes. Well-known afterwards in Canada for his notable work as the general manager of the Merchants' Bank, as well as for his fearless and shining honesty (which practically broke his own back) in laying bare the incredible disintegration of our Canadian Marine Department under the régime of his particular friends the Liberal party, he was at that time living at Halifax, busy, in the capacity of its chief accountant, with the difficult task, triumphantly achieved by him, of soundly organizing the Bank of Nova Scotia. Here, after a while, Mrs. Leonowens joined them, and wrote "Life and Travels in India," and "Our Asiatic Cousins." After the assassination of Czar Alexander the Second, she accepted from the "Youth's Companion," a magazine for which she wrote many articles, a commission to travel in Russia, and study the conditions there. That was the last of her professional literary work. Thenceforth she retired, in the main, into a singularly active and beneficent privacy, occupying herself with domestic duties and with a great variety of good works. In Halifax, for instance, where she rejoined Mr. Fyshe and her daughter after

her return from Russia, besides giving invaluable help in the upbringing of the rapidly multiplying young family there, she founded an Art School, the Pioneer Book Club, the Shakespeare Club, and worked hard and successfully to better the conditions of the female prisons. Thoroughly characteristic activities! She took them up again in like, though not identical, forms, when she came to live in Montreal.

This she did in 1901, after Mr. Fyshe had been appointed general manger of the Merchants' Bank. Most of the intervening years between 1888 and that date had been spent with her daughter in Germany, where they went together to have the children educated. Mrs. Leonowens took advantage of the admirable facilities she found in Leipzig University, to return once more with great energy to her studies in Sanscrit, which she had never altogether dropped and indeed kept up diligently to the very end of her life. The old Professor was at first extremely averse to have a woman attend his lectures. But one day she called on him and read him a passage from the Mahabharata. Enchanted by the perfection of her enunciation, he declared that his only remaining objection to her presence in his class-room lay in the manifest fact that she knew more of the language than he did. She had a great admiration for the Germans in many respects, but a very clear English eye for the elements of lumpishness, pedantry, sentimentality, callousness, servility, and arrogance, which even then disfigured their type of culture. One can easily imagine what she would have thought of the incredible exhibition they are now making of themselves before men and angels.

In 1902 the second great blow fell upon her with scarcely less stunning suddenness than the first, her young husband's death, had fallen. Her beloved daughter, one of the sweetest and loveliest of women, was cut down in her very prime by what was practically a mere accident. Ptomaine poisoning was the cause of her death. Thenceforth Mrs. Leonowens had to take her place and become as it were the mother of her own grandchildren. Being one of those rare persons who

have the secret of unfading youth, she had not lost either the flexibility or the firmness required for the competent and joyous discharge of this finest of duties, untimely laid upon her shoulders as it was, and yoked with an irreparable sorrow which never ceased to ache. In 1911 came her third and overwhelming wave of trouble, practically her own death-blow. In that year there flickered out the last spark of what had once been a really powerful flame. Mr. Fyshe died, the man she most admired in the world. He had fretted his heart and nerve out in trying to clean the corner of our Augean stable already mentioned. She had kept him alive, by a perfect miracle of will and watchfulness, years after the doctors had completely given him up. She was one of those people who impose wonderfully restricted limits on our too facile and faithless predication of the impossible. One could never say very confidently what she could not do. But that was the last victory of her "great heart." Its strong forces ebbed and sank when love and duty's latest evening breeze of summons to their flowing died away. Very soon after the release of her son-in-law she fell ill herself and never recovered. Her work was done and well done. The time had come to rest. For some three years she lay passive and happy, a child once more as it were, in the arms of the grandchildren whom she had warmed into ministering strength and motherliness under her wings; white-haired little Tommy Fyshe her great-grandchild, playing about the downy nest that was her couch; and then she quietly fell asleep. It was

> "An old age serene and bright
> And lovely as a Lapland night,"

where there is no darkness at all, but only a short breathing-space and hush of twilight, and day sets into day.

To some of us it makes much difference that she is now in her grave, there on the fair slope, looking towards the sunset, of the mountain she had come to love, the one visible thing in Montreal really worthy of her, the one which even our sordid ingenuity cannot deface. A green place with palm-trees and

a cool spring of bright water in a somewhat thirsty land has sunk out of sight, though not out of mind, with her. This Naiad had always been diligent, as we have seen, in tending as well as in lavishing her own streams. She had gathered from a wide range of the world's best. The everlasting sky that bends over our span of days, with its great lights and fountains of religion, thought, and poetry, had all been laid under contribution by her from its western to its far eastern reservoirs. In her youth she had drawn with crystalline pitchers from "cool Siloam's shady rill." She had drunk deep in her severe pure English home from the inspirations of the Christ on Calvary. The Buddha's orient grove of self-annihilating eternity-absorbing contemplation, where she sojourned almost as one naturalized to its sombre and abstract beauty, did not estrange her, as happens with some weaklings, from that far distant though truly kindred western birth-place of her spirit. On the contrary, it re-illumined, as it were, some part of her golden inheritance from home, making that more livingly her own and more precious to her than ever. Almost persuaded to be a Buddhist, she was not therefore the less, but all the more, a Christian. For, like Antigone, she was "born to join in love but not in hate." For her the saints and sages of India whom she studied with a sympathy so eager, only enriched, reinforced, and rekindled the words of life that had first fallen on her young ear from the hills of Galilee; she felt it to be the same old earnest melody though sounding in accents of a different timbre, its burden inculcated not effaced by the clear and powerful echo which reduplicated it, as in a splendid fugue, from this new, seemingly so alien, and yet in substance so unexpectedly concordant quarter of the morning heavens.

Such were the high conspiring sources from which she fed her inward light. It shone, waxing with her generous scattering of its rays, most radiantly and softly in the central sanctuary of home. We knew her here, at least in the first aspect she presented, almost as the ideal type of normal woman whose children and grandchildren were her primary care, the

esoteric circle of her worshippers that had the most intimate and dearest cause to arise and call her blessed. But though her charity began at home, it did not end there. The impulses of divine motherhood in her pressed for a wider outlet. Wherever she went, she never failed to draw, round her immediate central ring, a secondary one of friends; often young girls in whom she took the most vivid interest and delight, as well as older women, and some men; though on the whole she decidedly inclined to women, and was always a gallant champion of the rights of women. All these frequented her presence as a sort of shrine, where the deeper instincts of their own natures took on the courage of conviction; and the higher calls upon them, elsewhere, at times, so thin and doubtful, like ghostly voices, sounded authentic, natural, and clear, just as though they had struck a silver sounding-board. And beyond this closer sphere, she always reached out in effective sympathy and support, not only to all organized efforts for the diffusion of enlightenment and justice—McGill for instance had no warmer or more helpful friend in Montreal than she—but also to a quite definite cure of souls and bodies in some systematic personal effort, requiring, both from herself and the willing workers she enlisted around her, steady and exacting toil in the interests of the poor and helpless. In Montreal she chose the Foundling Hospital for her special labour of love. There was not a baby there, nor a baby's mother, that she did not know and warmly cherish. She was full of that Christlike parsimony which "gathers the fragments that nothing be lost," the flotsam and jetsam strewn so devastatingly by the brazen-bowelled enterprise of our shipwrecking, devil-take-the-hindmost, industrial system; full, too, of that audacious Christlike confidence in the alchemy of the powers which can touch to the finest and brightest issues what smug respectability gives up as hopeless black pitch fit only for defiling. Some of us knew her to be a queenly, high-hearted Deborah; one could see a flash from her as of a sword-blade sometimes; to these little ones of her Lord she was all Dorcas of the soft eyes. She was conspicuous among

that band of kind and capable women (well represented in Montreal) who, thank Heaven! abound upon this continent of ours and are the salt of it.

And yet she stood segregated among the very best of them, such as the worthy Miss Jane Addams. Her charm and genius were all her own. There was a specific aura encircling her that set her quite apart, like a bird of paradise among domestic fowl, from the too often somewhat dumpish and plantigrade excellence of our happily familiar type, the ordinary female worker of good works, or the slightly acidulated flavour of that other, no doubt equally useful, if even still less æsthetically convincing, brand of the modern serious woman, the society-reforming suffragettish logic-chopper. She had wings; could both sing and soar. After all the main point about her was, not that she dropped eggs, or split argumentative straws, but that she was capable of precipitating daisies and diamonds. She did not merely warm, she glowed; kindled the imagination as well as satisfied with bread-and-butter utilities, and sound well-baked ratiocinations. For all that cool virginal austerity that crowned her brows like a wreath of Sabrina's water-lilies,—to warn trespassers!—there were wild flavours in her, jets of a brave and gentle adventurousness in all-embracing thought and sympathy. She had "seen the cities of many men and known their minds." Nothing human was alien to her. No one could be more refreshingly free from that asphyxiating superfineness which is the final seal of underbreeding, the sickly perfume affected by the aspiring newcomer more desolating by far than any good old unsophisticated malodour. She was not a Yankee schoolmarm. She was an English queen. She did not veil the "limbs" of a piano with chaste "pants" from the "nude" procacious eye. She did not faint when the rude called a spade a spade. The sovereign simplicity of her pure heart was too robustly pure to harbour the meagrims of the squeamish, tottering prude.

But above all was the heroic strain in her; the convincing revelation which she was. She was a prophetess of the true

faith in a region where Baal is mighty and many Ahabs are egged on by Jezebels; a melodious word in bright characters of living flesh in the jangling Babel that makes our night hideous, and amid the flashy will o' the wisps that make it perilous; where the need of just such a word as she was is well-nigh desperate. She shone like a light-house in a muddy noisy sea. Her whole person was an invaluable antiseptic against the idols of this den of ours, this continent whose vastness does not save it from being to multitudes a cage, compared with which many a little land has been a free and spacious dwelling-place. What matters a slit of croft or three thousand leagues of fat farm land? She knew *it is the allowance of sky that matters*, and one foot's-breadth upon a mountain-top may bestow the lean burgess freedom of its sun and moon and stars, which the human pumpkins, grown gross on no end of exuberant acres, never lift a head to.

Mammon did not count her among his millions of votaries. She did not share that simple trust, grown so familiar to us, in the lightest word spoken by one of that great God's favourites and prophets on the things which he, just in virtue of those proud titles, is little likely to know anything at all about. She knew one can't have it both ways. It is not easy to combine the song of the lark with the jaws of the crocodile. Successful service of one power is no very promising school to quicken, for working in the exclusive vineyard of his bitterly jealous rival, the human faculties whose resolute suspension is too often the inexorably exacted *sine quâ non* of that very same aforesaid success. She agreed with him who said: "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon!" The way is strait, the gate is narrow! It is hard for a millionaire to enter. No wonder! We do not make it easier for the head swollen by our servility to pass through that eye of a needle.

There is, however, another idol, very kindly and compatibly associated, for the most part, with our Lord the Calf, whose cult, wide-spread among us as it is and has always been, was not shared by this half Buddhist and whole Christian. Few of us indeed there be, if any at all, who escape

quite clear from the insidious blight of this worship. One pictures its object as feminine, an ancient virgin though a foolish one, a sour, old maiden-aunt, ever nagging for the clean pinafores she makes men mistake for purity of heart, which means red blood and plenty of it—the thing she most abhors; a prim recording angel in mittens and phylacteries, quite oblivious to the weightier matters of justice and mercy, who shakes inexorably her gory cork-screw curls over her merciless chronicle of our small-beer peccadilloes. And yet she is a goddess sure enough, a very present power exerting a mighty and ubiquitous spiritual influence, all the more deadly that she is nameless and has no temples or statues of her own. An anaemic prohibitive Athene, shall we call her, sprung from the head of *Billikens*? In one hand she holds a grape-juice bottle, in the other a loving-cup of international soothing syrup. That is her present fashion. But she has always found some substitute varying from age to age with the ingenious shallowness of mankind for the symbols of true manhood and self-sacrifice, the spear and shield of the Warrior-Goddess of Wisdom whom she simulates and supplants. She is indeed no Pallas, but a mere Circe, and not an appetizing one when seen with clear eyes at close quarters. However, she is great on the "moralities" and "humanities" and so her hold is especially strong upon "religious" and "respectable" people. It has always been so. It was so, for instance, at a certain very decisive turning-point and cross-road of human history, in Palestine, some nineteen hundred and fifteen years ago—with amazing results! She seems to be the peculiar bane and pet vampire of our race, to such an extent indeed as to give some colour to the theory that we are descended from the "lost tribes." Foreigners say, at least not wholly without reason, that she is the principality and power that dominates the whole Angle-Saxon world, especially the North American continent. The Germans—by the aid of Beelzebub mostly—claim to be engaged at present in a vigorous effort to exorcise and dethrone her. I wish them luck I am sure. In England they

have in fact already dealt her some shrewd knocks. Think of the miracles they have wrought there upon the Non-Conformist Conscience! So far, however, in spite of such forceful persuasions as the *Lusitania*, they do not seem to have been entirely successful in loosening her grip upon our American kinsmen and fellow-worshippers of her dread divinity.

Now, to my mind, the crowning glory of Mrs. Leonowens, her specific value and distinction was that she never bowed the knee to the false, specious, enslaving, much-worshipped simulcrum who has a niche in every one of our churches and sucks the blood of all our higher faiths. This brave lady incarnated the antidote to our chief bane. The wrinkled hag had no allurements and no terrors for her. Not one grain of frankincense did she, sweet saint, burn upon that frequented altar. She preferred Vishnu and Indra. For why? She possessed the virtues which the sham virgin stuffed with sawdust—only caricatures. She defied and disproved the pale tyrant in her Master's way, the only way that is effectual, by the exhibition of a more excellent righteousness.

So she left the evangel of the rocking-chair, and the beatific yawning self-complacency which is its peace, to be disseminated by the very business-like orgies of its Corybants and chubby Galli of the Middle-West, the Goddess's own predestined priests, the born bartenders of her soft drinks. She left it and her with unruffled calm to the oleaginous propaganda of the Nebraskan Demosthenes; or to the prevailing punch of the Rev. Billy Sunday, D.D. Little would she have recked either of their dear Mistress's most lurid anathemas, *bruta fulmina* or *boomerangs*—who knows?—even when pitched up in snappy Bowery slang with a baseball curve upon them amid unprecedented showers of gate-money and alas! the plaudits of the righteous, reduced to be the "fans" and "routers" of this strange show and showman.

Poor well-meaning, indiscriminating righteous men of ours! They do not know their St. Paul any more. That is

the trouble. They "know not what spirit they are of." But Anna Leonowens did. What a rest and balm it would be, how cool and medicinal and clean and tuneful to turn to her from these ear-piercing, feverish horrors, like the sound of a thousand sharpening saws!—"tales told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

> " Dear and great angel wouldst thou only leave
> That child when thou art done with him for me!"
> " How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired!
> I think how I should view the earth and skies
> After thy healing with such different eyes!
> O world! as God has made it, all is beauty,
> And knowing this is love, and love is duty;
> What further can be sought for or declared?"

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise"—she thought of these things and made others think of them. Her mere existence in this time and place was a quiet living protest, worth much fine gold, against the shameless, brainless, turbid, roaring, gibbering superstitions, the bloated mud-gods that quack and croak and phosphoresce and pullulate among the lazy, fleshy, rotting weeds in our Serbonian bog, "where armies whole have sunk." She drew us away to the serene heights of lucidity and love where she dwelt, far out of range beyond the plunk and boom and gurgle of the squat, slimy Frog-Dagons. Her gods were the radiant and august presences of old Israel, India, Wales, and Hellas. Not the scrawny "Johnnies on the spot," of one-eyed yelping fanatics, but the Gods of the sunlit peaks who give their Beloved sleep; and a man's vision and tongue when he awakes.

> Love she had seen in huts where poor men lie,
> Her daily teachers had been woods and rills,
> The silence that is in the starry sky,
> The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

But she did not merely bear witness, and rebuke by the silent eloquence of her own still clearness and harmony. She spoke

out. She had, above all women I have known, what all women ought to have, courage, and an indisputable patent from God Almighty to command. She was not at all backward, either, in the exercise of that inborn right. Mongkut, as we saw, very credibly accused her of pointing the finger at his sacred person. It was "the finger of God," had he but known. I have myself heard her speak to a rather stingy, though well-meaning, if somewhat stupid, Dives with an edge of imperative scorn on her quiet voice, and yet as if it was not she at all that spoke, but a higher than she through her mouth. He felt it too, and flowed less sparingly; never dreaming of resentment. You would have said the rod of Moses had grazed his armoured hide, the one which brought sweet water out of the rock. That was one way among many finer ways, in which those who came within her circle were vitalized by her; constrained to own the unfaltering grasp of spiritual reality that was a sceptre for her, the contagious effluence of a sort of immortal and impersonal life she shed from her with an evidence that was all but palpable to the sense.

Well, she is gone, and who will fill the gap? To know her was to reverence and love her. To love her was a liberal education! To talk an hour with her was to touch the spheres and drink of living waters. Her house on McTavish Street, a house like other houses in Montreal, in a street not specially glorious among its streets, with her there, was the adytum of an authentic oracle that breathed truth and inspiration in the winning accents of the Graces. How did she do it? By earnest labour upon herself, as we have seen. But chiefly: She was, thanks to Heaven and her mother, an English lady—that was after all the tap-root of her secret—and, by her dear Master's grace, a woman who had never failed to win victory in the task that came to hand. Among the many daughters of her noble race who have done excellently and valiantly, few ever excelled the brave response she made to all the testing variety of heavy demands forced on her at the repeated sharp turns she met in the long road of her life. It was one protracted wrestle with three bad throws for her.

She rose from them; went from strength to strength; and ripened into mellow beauty. Well and sweetly content, too, she was to drop without a whimper, when the stalk was worn quite through, into the deep bosom of the Infinite Silence, taking little or no further thought for her own life whether the "Great Perhaps" held in its mysterious abysses the one answer for her individual consciousness and its extension elsewhere, or the other. On the whole, as it may surprise some to hear, she inclined to envisage the negative answer. "*In utrumque parata*," she bade farewell to Time and Maya. She had warmed both hands against the fire of life. It sank and she was ready to depart. "*Ut satur conviva.*" All the more, therefore, I humbly think, may one draw sheer strength from the memory of her. Ben Jonson's death-defying words on another flower of England whom he knew, the Countess of Pembroke, might have been cut upon her grave-stone. They would seem extragavant in her case and their original's only to such unhappy blighted creatures as have not blood and brains to see God anywhere at all.

Underneath this stone doth lie
As much virtue as could die,
Which in its life did vigour give
To as much beauty as could live.
* * * *
Sydney's sister, Pembroke's mother—
Death! ere thou hast slain another
Good and fair and wise as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee.
* * * *

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